

Some Fundamentals of the Lóngmén 龍門 (Dragon Gate) Lineage

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Technically speaking, Lóngmén 龍門 (Dragon Gate) is a lineage of Quánzhēn 全真 (Ch'úan-chēn; Complete Perfection; a.k.a., “Complete Reality”) Daoism. The latter is, first and foremost, a Daoist monastic order consisting of ordained Daoist priests and monastics (*dàoshì* 道士), with some lay initiates. As such, it emphasizes and requires the Three Vows (*sānshì* 三誓; *sānméng* 三盟), namely, celibacy (no sex), sobriety (no intoxicants), and vegetarianism (no meat), with celibacy understood as sexual propriety for “non-monastics” and vegetarianism often being closer to veganism (no animal products). As fully systematized in the late imperial period, Quánzhēn consists of seven lineages honorifically associated with the Seven Perfected (*qīzhēn* 七真), who were seven key figures in the early movement. Of these lineages, Lóngmén is the largest and most well-known, with its affiliates serving as religious administrators for most of the major Daoist temples and monasteries throughout mainland China. Although traditionally associated with Qiū Chǔjī 丘處機 (Chángchūn 長春 [Perpetual Spring]; 1148-1227), the official lineage was established by Wáng Chángyuè 王常月 (Kūnyáng 崑陽 [Paradisiacal Yang]; 1622?-1680), who was abbot of Báiyún guān 白雲觀 (White Cloud Monastery; Běijīng) during the early Qīng dynasty (1644-1911). As fully articulated and maintained, Lóngmén’s primary charism (spiritual signature) centers on ethics, specifically the study and application of Daoist precepts (*dàojiè* 道戒), with a secondary emphasis on internal alchemy (*nèidān* 內丹). The following materials are central to tradition-based Lóngmén adherence and lifeways.

- The three core precept texts and monastic manuals, which were compiled by Wáng Chángyuè and correspond to three ordination ranks. These include the *Chūzhēn jiè* 初真戒 (Precepts of Initial Perfection), *Zhōngjí jiè* 中極戒 (Precepts of Medium Ultimate), and *Tiānxiān jiè* 天仙戒 (Precepts of Celestial Immortality).
- The *Lóngmén xīnfǎ* 龍門心法 (Core Teachings of Dragon Gate), also known in a variant form as *Bìyuàn tánjīng* 碧苑壇經 (Platform Sutra of the Jade Garden), which was written by Wáng Chángyuè.
- The 100-character Lóngmén lineage-poem (*pàishī* 派詩), which forms the basis of Lóngmén ordination names (*fǎmíng* 法名). Specifically, actual ordained Lóngmén Daoists receive an ordination name based on the character sequence in relation to their *shīfu* 師父 (“master-father”). For example, Mǐn Yīdé’s 閔一得 (1758-1836) ordination name is Yīdé 一得 (Unified Attainment), with *yī* 一 (lit., “one”) being the 11th character and thus making him an 11th-generation Lóngmén monk. One way of confirming authentic affiliation involves tracing names of the associated *shīyé* 師爺 (“master-grandfather”; two characters/generations prior) and *shīfu* (one character/generation prior).

FURTHER READING

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